

PROCEEDINGS
The Surgeon General's Conference
on Solid Waste Management

FOR METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON
July 19-20, 1967

Edited by Leo Weaver

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Public Health Service

NATIONAL CENTER FOR URBAN AND INDUSTRIAL HEALTH
Solid Wastes Program

CINCINNATI

1967

Public Health Service Publication No. 1729

Library of Congress Catalog No. 67-62888

**For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402 - Price 75 cents**

FOREWORD

SEVERAL MONTHS HAVE GONE BY since we met to discuss Metropolitan Washington's area-wide solid waste management problems. Since that time, much has happened and I believe significant progress has been made toward the solution of these problems. One important action was the announcement by the Secretary of the Interior and the Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia of a timetable of 60 to 90 days for the conversion of Kenilworth from an open burning dump to a sanitary landfilling demonstration for community improvement.

The Kenilworth Dump has long been an ugly, enormous, burning pile of solid waste, befouling the air of our nation's capital with great plumes of smoke. It has been a menace to health in Washington, D.C. and its environs. Unfortunately, in other cities and towns across the nation, similiar dumps pose the same problem.

The idea of getting rid of the Kenilworth Dump was a top priority subject for discussion in the proceedings that make up the subject of this volume. It is a pleasure to be able to report, so soon after the conference, that the meeting stirred prompt action.

But much remains to be done. In calling the conference I stressed that lack of technology is not the real barrier to safe and sanitary solid waste disposal. The barriers are chiefly political and economic. The local governments of the Washington area, working together toward a common solution, constitute the vital force required to achieve the environmental health benefits inherent in effective solid wastes management. The many salutary comments received indicate the conference answered both a regional and a national need. Certainly it has put the Washington area problems of solid waste management in better perspective and created a more favorable environment for innovative solutions.

The conference approach itself is applicable to our many metropolitan areas. The conference format, together with input from the well-chosen speakers with various viewpoints, present in these proceedings a valuable dialogue concerning the problem here in the Washington area and elsewhere in the country.

WILLIAM H. STEWART
Surgeon General

November 1967
Bethesda, Maryland

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Special appreciation for assistance and cooperation is extended to the staff of the National Center for Air Pollution Control and the Training Program of the National Center for Urban and Industrial Health.

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